

## **Epidemiology and Surveillance Working Group**

### **Focus Area B**

**August 14, 2002, 3pm-4:40pm**

**Facilitators:** Mary Sheryl Horine, Patricia Kludt, Fredric Cantor

**Attendees:** Tom Quail, Jim Hines, Paul Tierney, David Sherman, John, Grieb, Tracy LaPorte, Dawn Heisey-Grove, Dara Spatz Friedman, Ellen Gould, Lynda Glenn, Susan Soliva, Allison Hackbarth, Michael Feeney, Steven McOrist, Jean Bennett, Joshua Das, Beverly Anderson, Anita Barry, Linda Walsh, Carter Luke, Robert Bourgeault, Gillian Haney, Fredric Cantor, Mary Sheryl Horine, Patricia Kludt, Bela Matyas, Jim Knight, Kurt Seetoo, Barbara Bolstorff, Jana Ferguson

### **Overview of funding and CDC Cooperative Agreement**

- Mary Sheryl Horine reviewed current bioterrorism funding in Massachusetts and the focus areas for the CDC Cooperative Agreement. Focus area B is divided into four distinct areas: epidemiology/infectious disease response plans, food vulnerability, water vulnerability and veterinary/zoonotic surveillance and training.

### **Review of Preliminary Mission Statement and Timelines**

- **Goals of Epidemiology and Surveillance Working Group, role of working group:** See attachment entitled "Focus Area B Mission Statement." This document outlines the working group's preliminary mission statement, three critical capacities and the associated objectives and proposed representation in the working group. A proposed timeline for completion of the primary objectives was also included and reviewed, see attachment "BT WG Timeline." One suggestion on the timeline was to extend the amount of time needed to complete the food vulnerability assessment. A question was asked about the flexibility of the timelines. Mary Sheryl Horine assured the group that the timelines can be adjusted as needed.
- The main goal of the working group is to assist and provide feedback to the CDC Bioterrorism Advisory Committee with regards to epidemiology/infectious disease response plans, food vulnerability, water vulnerability, and veterinary/zoonotic surveillance and training. In addition, it will be necessary to collaborate with other working groups, since these critical capacities overlap with other focus group areas. Statewide preparedness exercises will also be implemented.
- There was some concern among members that the working group would not be reviewing surveillance systems specifically. Dr. Bela Matyas noted that one of the goals of this working group is to have response plans in place should a surveillance system see a spike in illness. Active surveillance projects, both on-going and new, will be addressed by the Enhanced Surveillance Project Group to be formed in the coming months. Overviews of

other surveillance activities related to bioterrorism will be presented to this working group at future scheduled meetings.

### **Additional representation on Working Group**

- Working group participants suggested inviting other parties to participate in the working group. Suggestions included:
  - Massachusetts Medical Society
  - Massachusetts Health Officers Association
  - Another Region 1 municipality in addition to Springfield (Pittsfield was suggested)
  - Massachusetts Food Association
  - Massachusetts Retailers Association
  - Food Establishment Advisory Committee
  - Massachusetts Farm Bureau
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - Municipal water utilities
  - Metropolitan District Commission
  - Department of Environmental Management
  - U.S. Food and Drug Administration
  - United States Department of Agriculture (APHIS and FSIS)
  - Division of Marine Fisheries
  - Representation from Massachusetts zoos
- It was noted that the MDPH Drug Control Program is part of the Division of Food and Drugs.

### **Discussion—Where do we go next?**

- The working group agreed to split into four subgroups.
  - **Epidemiology/Infectious Disease Response Plans:** Facilitators will be Mary Sheryl Horine and Patricia Kludt. The first meeting of this subgroup will be held at SLI on 9/12/02 at 2:00pm in room 133.
    - [Marysheryl.horine@state.ma.us](mailto:Marysheryl.horine@state.ma.us) (617) 983-6800
    - [Patricia.Kludt@state.ma.us](mailto:Patricia.Kludt@state.ma.us) (617) 983-6800
  - **Food Vulnerability:** Facilitators will be Paul Tierney and Jim Hines
    - [Paul.J.Tierney@state.ma.us](mailto:Paul.J.Tierney@state.ma.us) (617) 983-6760
    - [James.Hines@state.ma.us](mailto:James.Hines@state.ma.us) (617) 626-1810
  - **Water Vulnerability:** Joshua Das, the representative from MWRA, agreed to assist in the facilitation of this subgroup\*
    - [Joshua.Das@mwra.state.ma.us](mailto:Joshua.Das@mwra.state.ma.us) (617) 788-4668
    - \*Additional facilitation will be identified
  - **Veterinary/Zoonotic Surveillance and Training:** Facilitators will be Fredric Cantor and Dave Sherman
    - [Fredric.Cantor@state.ma.us](mailto:Fredric.Cantor@state.ma.us) (617) 983-6800
    - [David.Sherman@state.ma.us](mailto:David.Sherman@state.ma.us) (617) 626-1790

- The subgroup facilitators will create a list of individuals/groups who should be recruited for each subgroup. Individuals who could not attend this initial meeting are encouraged to contact subgroup facilitators via phone or email for information about participating in one or more of the subgroups. The subgroup facilitators will convene meetings (this may be through email) prior to October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2002 in order to discuss the goals of the subgroup. It was noted that some individuals might need to participate in more than one subgroup. The subgroup facilitators should deliver a verbal report of their activities and accomplishments to date to the working group facilitators by September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2002, so that these updates can be presented at the Bioterrorism Advisory Committee meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002.
- Subgroup facilitators should also create an annotated list of existing response plans of relevance to bioterrorism.
- Participants mentioned that videoconference or teleconference would be useful tools for convening subcommittees. Unfortunately, MDPH does not have videoconference capabilities, but it does have teleconference capabilities.

**Next meeting: Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2002 at 1:30pm. Exact location will be determined and sent electronically to workgroup participants.**